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true American optimism and pluck which constantly made light of the discomforts of life in the backwoods.

Of special interest are the sturdy characters, with the individualism of the frontier, that crowd these pages. Very sympathetic is the picture of Vulcanus Greatheart, "by birth a Virginian, by trade a blacksmith, by nature a gentleman, and by grace a Christian," whose skill in forging rifles and axes was equalled by his marksmanship. Another interesting character is Aunt Kitty, who was a "leettle too modest" for backwoods standards. Then there is Neighbour Ashford, the new purchase philosopher, who had proved to his own satisfaction that the earth is "as flat as a pancake," and the sun is nothing but "a great shine." Occasionally the author vents his personal spleen, as in the portraits of Insidias Cutswell, Esq., and Dr. Bloduplex, but usually he is sympathetic.

No less interesting are the accounts of journeys which Hall made through the Indiana wilderness. Among them is a trip to Vincennes across the "grassy lake of the prairie" and its "picturesque islets of timber." Another outing on horseback took him across the new purchase to the Tippecanoe battle field. There is an excellent description of the topography of the battle field and of the details of the combat. Equally well told are Hall's experiences as a "big bug" who endeavored to hold "young democrats" in a state school to scholastic standards. Ecclesiastical and political interference with the people's school is vigorously set forth. The pluck of the frontier student is reflected in Henry, who worked for one week in order to earn the two dollars necessary to help pay his tuition. Hoosier perseverance is illustrated by George, who rewrote his "piece" for the school exhibition thirty-six times.

To the general reader, as well as the student of early western history, *The new purchase* will prove of absorbing interest. Especially should the book find a place in the school library, for like Cooper's novels, it will awaken an interest that may be directed toward the more serious, and, it must be confessed, more prosaic historians.

BEVERLEY W. BOND, JR.

Transactions of the Illinois state historical society for the years 1914 and 1915. Fifteenth and sixteenth annual meetings of the society, Springfield, Illinois, May 7-8, 1914, and May 13-14, 1915. [Publication numbers twenty, and twenty-one, Illinois state historical library] (Springfield: Board of trustees of the Illinois state historical library, 1915, 1916. 214; 211 p.)

These volumes contain the usual matters of information relating to the society, the list of officers, the constitution, official proceedings, appeal to the public, and the secretary's report. Mrs. Jessie Palmer

Weber, the secretary, summarizes the account of each year's work and presents an encouraging outlook. In point of numbers Illinois claims the largest state historical society in the United States. The annual address for 1914 was given by Justice Orrin N. Carter, of the state supreme court, on "The early courts of Cook county." Henry A. Converse of the Sangamon county bar, has a paper on "The life and services of Shelby M. Cullom," and there are several brief and eloquent memorial addresses on Cullom, delivered on the occasion of his funeral services. W. W. Sweet, of De Pauw university, has a paper on "The Methodist Episcopal church and reconstruction," in which it is stated "without hesitancy that the Methodist Episcopal church in the South was one of the strong factors in organizing the Republican party there and is therefore, partly responsible for perpetrating carpet bag government and negro rule upon the prostrate South." J. H. Burnham tells of "The destruction of Kaskaskia by the Mississippi river;" John H. Hauberg of "Black Hawk's home country;" George W. Young of "The Williamson county vendetta;" W. H. Jenkins of "The thirty-ninth Illinois volunteers;" and the "Great whig convention of Illinois in 1840" is considered in three papers by Edith P. Kelly, Martha M. Davidson, and Isabel Jamison, in which the contributions of northern and southern Illinois to the whig "hullabaloo" campaign and the convention itself are presented. There are also papers on Fox Indians and the Seventh Illinois infantry by John F. Steward and Robert W. Campbell.

These papers contain valuable features of Illinois history. Any student interested in political and party history would be interested and well repaid by reading the papers on the whigs of Illinois in 1840. The list of delegates to the state convention is valuable and suggestive.

The *Transactions* of 1915 contain a paper on Adlai E. Stevenson, a paper on General James Shields by Francis O'Shaughnessy; and another on "The banker-farmer movement," by B. F. Harris, while there are a number of other contributions of more distinctly local interest relating to Illinois Indians, and to some patriotic societies and family histories, such as the "Warrens of Warrenville." The experiences of such pioneer families as the Warrens are typical of many and they throw light upon the times and conditions under which the west was settled. Early conditions in Quincy, 1822-1830, are also portrayed under the caption of "Historical papers, 1912," apparently contributed by Polly Sumner chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution.

Each of the two volumes is illustrated and contains a full index. The Illinois society shows vigorous life and public spirit in these worthy contributions.

J. A. W.